

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed January 9, 2008, the Examiner rejected claims 22, 25, 30, 34,-37, and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite; rejected claims 22, 25, 30, and 33-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Japanese Publication No. JP 08-257136 to Asano et al. ("Asano") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,984,581 to Stice ("Stice") and U.S. Patent No. 4,763,647 to Gambale ("Gambale"); rejected claim 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Asano, in view of Stice, Gambale, and U.S. Patent No. 5,174,302 to Palmer ("Palmer"); rejected claim 61 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Asano in view of Stice, Gambale, and U.S. Patent No. 5,947,940 to Beisel ("Beisel"); and allowed claims 28, 29, 32, 38, 57, 58, 60, 62-89, 96, and 98-116. Applicants disagree with the propriety of the claim rejections, however, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants present the above amendments, without prejudice or disclaimer, with the understanding that the rejected claims may be pursued in a forthcoming continuation application.

Thus, by this Amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 22, 25, 30, 33-37, 39, and 61. After entry of this Amendment, claims 28-29, 32, 38, 57-58, 60, 62-89, 96, and 98-116 are pending in this application, with claims 28, 29, 32, 38, 57, 60, 62, 70, and 84 being independent.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

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